

WASHINGTON – Congressman Jo Bonner, R-Alabama, offered the following comment in response to today's BP criminal settlement with the U.S. Justice Department in the Deepwater Horizon disaster.

"Today's announced criminal settlement between BP and the Justice Department represents but a down payment on the oil company's obligation to mitigate the environmental and economic damage it unleashed on the Gulf Coast more than two years ago. Furthermore, I am pleased that BP agreed to accept criminal responsibility for the deaths of 11 people and the events that led to the disaster.

"The criminal settlement is the first phase in the ongoing settlement negotiations between BP and the federal government that will eventually include damages under the Clean Water Act. BP must not mistake the Justice Department's agreement to these criminal penalties from the 2010 spill as a signal that pending civil penalties under the Clean Water Act will be any less severe.

"When Attorney General Holder personally informed me of the settlement today he gave his assurances that the Justice Department would vigorously pursue further civil penalties under the Clean Water Act which is subject to the RESTORE Act. I have made clear to the Attorney General that anything less would be unacceptable to our coastal communities."

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